



Worship for Sunday, October 4, 2020 - 18th Sunday after Pentecost
St. Stephen the Martyr Lutheran Church
Greendale, WI www.ssmelca.org

Introduction to the day

In today's gospel reading, Jesus tells a vineyard parable, which serves as an image of Israel, the prophets' mission, and Christ's death. For Christians, the vineyard also speaks of God's love poured out in the blood of Christ, given to us for the forgiveness of sin. Grafted onto Christ the vine at baptism, we are nourished with wine and bread so that we may share Christ's sufferings and know the power of his resurrection.

PRELUDE - "Song" by Louis Vierne

BLESSING OF QUILTS

May God's Blessing be upon these quilts...

Warming, Comforting, Enfolding and Embracing.

May these quilts be a safe haven. A sacred place of security and well-being...

Sustaining and embracing in good times as well as in difficult ones.

May those who receive these quilts be, kept in joy, graced with peace,
and wrapped in love. Amen.

TEMPLE TALK - Marion Walton

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

C: **Amen**

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Faithful God,

C: **have mercy on us.**

**We confess that we are captive to sin
and cannot free ourselves.**

**We turn from your loving embrace
and go our own ways.**

**We pass judgment on one another
before examining ourselves.**

We place our own needs before those of our neighbors.

We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves.

**Make us humble, cast away our transgressions,
and turn us again to life in you**

through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

P: God hears the cries of all who call out in need,
and through his death and resurrection,
Christ has made us his own.
Hear the truth that God proclaims:
Your sins are forgiven in the name of + Jesus Christ.
Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness
to do God's work in the world.

C: **Amen.**

GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

HYMN OF PRAISE - "As the Grains of Wheat"

Refrain

As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-cred in - to one to be - come our bread; so may all your peo-ple from
all the ends of earth be gath-cred in - to one in you.

1 As this cup of bless-ing is shared with - in our midst,
2 Let this be a fore-taste of all that is to come when

Refrain
may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

Text: Didache, 2nd cent.; Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: AS THE GRAINS, Marty Haugen

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PRAYER OF THE DAY

C: **Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 5:1-7

The prophet sings a sad, parable-like love song about the relationship between God and Israel. In this song Israel is compared to a promising vineyard. Despite God's loving care, the vineyard that is Israel has brought forth "wild grapes" of injustice and distress, when fine grapes of justice and righteousness were expected.

¹Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.

²He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines;
he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it;
he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes.

³And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard.

⁴What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it?
When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes?

⁵And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard.

I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured;

I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.

⁶I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed,
and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;

I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

⁷For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah
are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness,
but heard a cry!

L: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING: Philippians 3:4b-14

Paul reviews some of his supposed credentials, which no longer have any bearing in comparison to the right relationship he has been given through the death of Christ. The power of Christ's resurrection motivates him to press on toward the ultimate goal, eternal life with Christ.

[Paul writes:] ^{4b}If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION - Celtic Alleluia



The image shows two staves of musical notation for the Celtic Alleluia. Both staves are in the treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody is written on a five-line staff. The lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.' are written below the first staff, and 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.' are written below the second staff. The music consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests and a final double bar line at the end of the second staff.

Verses may be sung by a leader. Then the alleluia is repeated.

Music: Fintan O'Carroll and Christopher Walker
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GOSPEL: Matthew 21:33-46

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew. **C:** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus tells a parable to the religious leaders who are plotting his death, revealing that their plans will, ironically, bring about the fulfillment of scripture.

[Jesus said to the people:] ³³“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. ³⁴When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ ³⁹So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” ⁴¹They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.”

⁴²Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures:

‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’?

⁴³Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. ⁴⁴The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”

⁴⁵When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

MESSAGE - “Keepin’ On” *Rev. Brian Hooper*

HYMN OF THE DAY - "The Church's One Foundation"

Soloist: Andi Matusiak



1 Christ is made the sure foun - da - tion, Christ, our head and
 2 To this tem - ple, where we call you, come, O Lord of
 3 Here be - stow on all your ser - vants what they seek from
 4 Praise and hon - or to the Fa - ther, praise and hon - or

cor - ner - stone, cho - sen of the Lord and pre - cious,
 hosts, and stay; come with all your lov - ing - kind - ness,
 you to gain; what they gain from you, for - ev - er
 to the Son, praise and hon - or to the Spir - it,

bind - ing all the church in one; ho - ly Zi - on's
 hear your peo - ple as they pray; and your full - est
 with the bless - ed to re - tain; and here - af - ter
 ev - er three and ev - er one: one in might and

help for - ev - er and our con - fi - dence a - lone.
 ben - e - dic - tion shed with - in these walls to - day.
 in your glo - ry ev - er - more with you to reign.
 one in glo - ry while un - end - ing a - ges run!

Text: Latin hymn, c. 7th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
 Music: WESTMINSTER ABBEY, Henry Purcell, 1659–1695; arr. Ernest Hawkins, 1802–1868

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**I believe in a great God who created the world
 our of power and love God's creative love
 is reflected in all creation.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, truly God and truly human.
 His life, his teaching, his miracles, his death
 and his resurrection provide true forgiveness
 of sin and life for all eternity.**

**His strength bolsters my weakness.
His love conquers my failures.
His sacrifice forgives my sins.
I trust him as a friend and brother.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
God at work in and among us.
I believe God is present and active
in today's world and I can know
some of the joy of heaven right now.
I believe the church of Christ is the people of God,
and I experience true meaning and
everlasting love in my life through prayer. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

L: Today, October 4, is St. Francis' Day. Francis cared fervently for the church, the earth and its animals, peace, and the poor. Let us now pray for these concerns, responding to each petition with the words "in mercy, receive our prayers."

A brief silence.

L: God most high, we pray for the church: for our bishop, our pastors and deacons, and our own congregation; for the ministry of Pope Francis; for the work of Franciscan friars and sisters; and for churches that are struggling with few resource. *A brief silence.* That all the baptized may produce good fruit, sowing faith where there is doubt, we pray to you, O God our Redeemer:

C: in mercy, receive our prayers.

L: We pray for the earth and its animals: for farmlands; for animals whose habitat is threatened; for livestock; for all the animals that we raise for human use; for service animals; and for our dear pets. *A brief silence.* That the earth may be sustained with your care, and that we will sow joy where there is sadness, we pray to you, O God our Creator:

C: in mercy, receive our prayers.

L: We pray for peace: between nations; in our cities; among political rivals; throughout our coming election; between generations; between long-time citizens and new immigrants; in our churches and in our homes. *A brief silence.* That we may become instruments of your peace, sowing union where there is discord, we pray to you, O God, our Peacemaker:

C: in mercy, receive our prayers.

L: We pray for those who are poor: for those who are unemployed; for migrants; for those who are marginalized by prejudice; for orphans; for school children with no digital access. *A brief silence.* That we may give assistance where there is poverty and need, we pray to you, O God our Provider:

C: in mercy, receive our prayers.

L: We pray for all who are suffering: for those laid low by the coronavirus; for those living with anxiety; for those whose sorrow is known only to you; for those who will die this day; and for those whose names we call out to you here:...*A brief silence.* That we may sow hope where there is despair, we pray to you, O God our Comforter:

C: in mercy, receive our prayers.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

- L: We pray that we may sow pardon where there is injury and love where there has been hatred, we pray to you, O God our Healer:
- C: **in mercy, receive our prayers.**
- P: Enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, as we trust in your salvation through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- C: **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

- C: **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

SHARING THE PEACE

- P: The peace of Christ be with you always.
- C: **And also with you.**

OFFERTORY *(Thanks for sharing your gifts. Offering envelopes can still be mailed to the church, you can use the GIVE + app found on the resource tab at ssmelca.org or you may wish to sign up for Simply Giving to have your offering scheduled on an automatic basis.)*

OFFERING PRAYER

- L: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- C: **Amen.**

BLESSING

- P: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
- C: **Amen**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE - "A Festive Intrada" by *Walter Pelz*

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SSM GRATEFUL STATEMENTS

-I am grateful for the thought that has been put into our being able to “attend” church services as seamlessly as possible during these trying times. I’m also grateful for the kind SSM community.

-I am grateful for having the opportunity to discuss “White Fragility” with our Thursday book group.

Welcoming All

Greetings, dear friends in Jesus.

Today, we prayerfully begin our 2021 stewardship estimate of giving with the aspiring first theme entitled, *Welcoming All*.

While we are not totally there yet, let us consider ***welcoming all*** as a continuation of our 2020 stewardship *Walk with Jesus* theme. Why this theme? For the answer, let's turn to Romans 15:7 when Paul challenged: "*Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.*" If any verse serves as a distinct reminder of Jesus' welcoming nature, I believe this one nails it. A feeling of being welcome is one uniting quality of who we are as a caring and generous congregation as evidenced by written and verbal feedback from new members over many years.

As a welcoming congregation, how do we connect the dots to our estimate of giving program for 2021? I sincerely believe our congregation has a strong history of welcoming those who may be considered "different" -like me who grew up in a different faith. I came to St. Stephen the Martyr in 1995, with my late husband, Chuck Marotske, as a stranger to living as a Lutheran. You welcomed me. You gave me a spiritual home.

In Mathew 25:35, we find the verse, "...I was a stranger and you welcomed me" This verse speaks specifically to those, like me, who might initially be hard to welcome. Your kindness then and now shows who you are in sharing God's many blessings as a generous, caring and welcoming congregation. There are many more Bible verses about welcoming the stranger -after all, the entire Bible, as I'm learning, is the story of how God has welcomed all of humanity.

Now, and well into 2021, change will be part of our new normal. Whether we worship online or in person, we are united within God's mission to welcome all; love God; and serve others. Clearly, no one congregation can be all things to all people. Still, each congregation is something vital to someone through stewardship. Each of us has unique talents and blessings vital to those in need. What a great way to show we "welcome all!"

In the coming days leading to mailing your 2021 "Estimate of Giving" to our church office, please consider adding the cost of a loaf of bread, or \$5 more to your weekly or monthly offering total. If able to give more, great! "To whom much is given, much will be required." (Luke: 12:48).

Together, let us now pray in thanksgiving for God's welcoming generosity of blessings in our daily lives and our continuing opportunity to share.

ALL: Dear Lord, You have blessed our congregation with a welcoming nature that continues to grow in understanding, faith and love for You. Each of us has received blessing upon blessing. For this we give You our thanks. As You have led us in the past, so we ask You to be with us in the future. Help us. Lead us as we embark upon our 2021 stewardship estimate of giving. Open our eyes to see the welcoming vision You have laid before us. Grant us generous hearts to make that welcoming vision a reality. We ask this in thanksgiving for Your many blessings. Amen.

Thank you for your continuing stewardship.

Marion Walton - Stewardship Team Member